



**For Immediate Release:  
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## **The Inland Empire Utilities Agency Hosts a Garden in Every School® Workshop**

**Inland Empire** - On Saturday, February 21st, the Inland Empire Utilities Agency held a Garden in Every School® Workshop in Chino about the award winning program which installs water efficient gardens at up to 7 schools within IEUA's service area each year. Schools interested in applying to the program and past participants gathered together to share their experiences. Thirty people attended the workshop, representing 10 schools from the cities of Rancho Cucamonga, Chino, Upland, and Ontario.

The workshop began with a presentation by Elizabeth Hurst, project manager of IEUA's Garden in Every School® program. In addition to providing details on how to apply and the scope of the program, Ms. Hurst reminded participants of the importance of having a water-wise garden: California is in a drought. "Each garden is a water efficient demonstration garden. Since up to 60% of our water supply is used irrigating outdoor landscaping, teaching kids, parents, and communities how to have a water efficient irrigation system and garden is incredibly important in this time of drought. Participating schools become a leader within their communities on how to conserve water and at the same time students gain the opportunity to learn through hands on experiences in the garden which are tied to State aligned curriculum for science, math, nutrition, and the environment."

Past participants provided updates on how they were using their gardens and shared their experiences with potential applicants. Each of them was frank about the amount of time, dedication and work it takes to build and maintain a garden at their schools, but agreed that the benefits to the school and students were worth the effort. "It takes the whole school community to build a garden, from the students and parents to the maintenance and facility managers," said Marie Taber, the teacher in charge of Foothill Knoll's garden. "We received our grant 3 years ago and we are still working on it to complete our vision of a forest on campus. But the children take great pride in it and are out there every day, playing and tending to their garden."

Katie White at Oak Park elementary shared a similar enthusiasm for the program. "It took a lot of effort to get our garden started, but it has been so exciting for the students and teachers to see the vegetables grow that at least two of us went home and built our own vegetable gardens. It is wonderful to see the kids working in the garden and looking forward to eating the vegetables that

they grew.”

Kathy Conway from Newman Elementary noticed additional benefits to the students’ studies through the school garden program: “The kids got excited about school, and that interest made its way into their test scores and homework. By strengthening their ties to school, their grades jumped through the roof.”

Additional presentations were given about a variety of curriculum, funding, and field trip opportunities within the Chino Basin including the Healthy San Bernardino Kids Fitness Challenge, Chino Basin Water Conservation District’s demonstration garden, the UCCE San Bernardino County Master Gardener Program; Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden’s teacher workshop; WEWAC’s Project WET curriculum; and SAWA’s field trips/tours and wetland based curriculum for teachers. The workshop concluded with a tour of the Chino Creek Wetlands and Educational Park by SAWA.

Partners and sponsors of the GIES program include the Chino Basin Water Conservation District, Regional Water Conservation Partnership (Cities of Chino, Chino Hills, Ontario, Upland, Monte Vista Water District, Cucamonga Valley Water District, Fontana Water Co., San Antonio Water Co.), Valley View High School, Lewis Group of Companies, Exotic Aquatic, Palo Verde Landscape, Modern Irrigation, El Nativo Nursery, and Kellogg Garden Products.

For more information on the Garden in Every School® Program, contact Elizabeth Hurst at 909.993.1634 or visit IEUA’s website.